



Brownfields Showcase Community Denver, CO

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

Brownfields are abandoned, idled or underused industrial and commercial properties where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived contamination. In May 1997, Vice President Gore announced a Brownfields National Partnership to bring together the resources of more than 15 federal agencies to address local cleanup and reuse issues in a more coordinated manner. In 1998, this multi-agency partnership designated 16 "Brownfields Showcase Communities"—models demonstrating the benefits of collaborative activity on brownfields. In October 2000, the partnership selected 12 additional "Brownfields Showcase Communities" to continue the success of the initiative. The Brownfields Showcase Communities are distributed across the country and vary by size, resources, and community type. A wide range of support will be leveraged, depending on the particular needs of each Showcase Community.

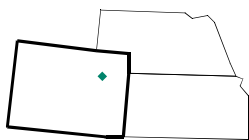
BACKGROUND

The Brownfields National Partnership has selected Denver, Colorado, as a Brownfields Showcase Community. Denver has targeted three brownfields neighborhoods—Globeville, Elyria/Swansea, and Northeast Parkhill—which are heavily impacted by industrial uses and have not benefitted from Denver's growing economy. Compared with the rest of Denver, the targeted neighborhoods have at least twice the minority population, earn as much as one-third less, and average approximately 10 percent more persons living below poverty level. Denver has been designated an Enterprise Community. More than one-third of the 3,979 acres in these neighborhoods is zoned industrial, including two auto salvage yards. Denver is currently redeveloping a 22.5-acre Globeville industrial site with

heavy metals contamination, and has identified a 5-acre auto salvage site for environmental assessment in Elyria/Swansea adjacent to 8.5 acres of industrial land that the city plans to redevelop.

Denver began to focus on cleaning up the Central Platte Valley (CPV) in the 1980s. The CPV was contaminated with landfill byproducts, radioactive material from radium processing sites, and residue from railroad yard maintenance facilities. The end result of these cleanup efforts includes the Six Flags Elitch Gardens Amusement Park, the Colorado Oceans Journey Aquarium, Coors Field (home of the Colorado Rockies), the Pepsi Center Arena (home of the Colorado Avalanche and Denver Nuggets), the REI Denver Flagship Store (a large outdoor sports equipment retailer), and Commons Park (Denver's newest public events and recreation facility).

Community Profile



Denver, Colorado

The City of Denver has been highly successful in undertaking brownfields redevelopment efforts in the Central Platte Valley. The area is now expanding its efforts to focus on implementing a similar strategy to identify, clean up, and redevelop inner-city brownfields sites in three low-income neighborhoods—Globeville, Elyria/Swansea, and Northeast Parkhill—which have large minority populations and are heavily impacted by industrial uses.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Denver has formed partnerships with federal, state, and local entities to address brownfields issues.

Partnerships include:

- EPA, whose assistance includes two Targeted Brownfields Assessments and an Assessment Demonstration Pilot to address a groundwater plume at the former Stapleton International Airport. Denver also participates as a coalition partner with the Colorado Revolving Loan Fund to assist with neighborhood brownfields projects and a Job Training Pilot to train Denver residents for environmental cleanups.
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, which provided \$40 million in grants and loan guarantees for Denver brownfields projects.
- U.S. Department of Commerce-Economic Development Administration, which provided a number of inner-city redevelopment grants, including one for \$800,000 for the Northside Treatment Plant project.
- U.S. Department of Energy, which helped Denver research the concept of eco-industrial parks and sustainable development for the Northside Treatment Plant.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which worked with Denver to revitalize the South Platte River Corridor. The project has identified 16 potential brownfields sites along the South Platte River for potential remediation and development.
- Small Business Administration, which has helped Denver provide loans to small businesses, some with contaminated properties.
- Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, which manages three programs, including a brownfields assessment program

Contacts

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For more information on the Brownfields Showcase Communities,
visit the EPA Brownfields Web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/showcase.htm>.

(concentrating on sites with strong public benefit), a voluntary cleanup program, and the Colorado Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (\$500,000 of loan money to clean up sites).

- Downtown Denver Partnership, a property owners association for downtown Denver that was instrumental in coordinating development efforts in the LoDo area.
- South Platte River Commission, which is responsible for redeveloping Denver's urban river corridors, many of which have areas of significant contamination.
- At the regional level, Denver will begin working with the Denver Regional Council of Governments on their brownfields research program. This effort is being coordinated with the state's smart growth program to demonstrate the potential that brownfields have for reducing sprawl and conserving energy sources.

SHOWCASE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES

Denver has been very successful in managing brownfields projects in the Central Platte Valley and is now eager to implement a strategy as a Showcase Community to identify, cleanup, and redevelop inner-city brownfields sites in low-income neighborhoods. This strategy includes an effort to mobilize local, state, and federal resources to cooperatively address the serious environmental and economic problems that exist in these areas. Funds and technical assistance available under the Showcase Community designation will assist Denver in a number of ways, including site assessment and pre-cleanup activities, as well as coordinating all resource providers participating in Denver's Brownfields Program. Denver's innovative approach to developing a geocode mapping system to identify brownfields sites will serve as a national model for other cities.